

## Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.

### Main source of fuel

Sugar, along with starch and fiber, belongs to the nutrient category called carbohydrates. Carbohydrates—sugars and starches—are your body's main source of fuel.

Your body doesn't turn all of its blood sugar into energy at the same time. As blood sugar levels rise above normal, insulin (a hormone from your pancreas) signals your liver, muscles, and other cells to store the extra. Some gets stored in the muscles and liver as glycogen, a storage form of carbohydrate. Some may be converted to body fat—if you consume more calories than your body needs.

### Did you know...

- ? **The average American eats 125 pounds of sugar in a year.** This includes table sugar as well as sugar found in jams, jellies, syrup, candy, soda, gelatin desserts, cookies and fun fruits to name a few foods.
- ? **Honey and brown sugar have the same nutrient content as white sugar.** Honey is a mixture of different sugars formed from nectar by bees. Brown sugar is merely sugar crystals, flavored with molasses.
- ? **Hard candy poses no more threat of cavities to your teeth than pasta does.** The cavity-producing process starts when bacteria in your mouth mix with carbohydrates—both sugar and starches—to make acids. These acids can cause tooth decay.

### Sugar Myths

- ≈ **Causes Hyperactivity? No.** Experts advise adults to look at the child's overall environment—special events or excitement—that may cause unruly behavior, not the sweets. There is some evidence that sugars may actually have a calming effect.
- ≈ **Causes Diabetes? No.** In diabetes, the body cannot use sugar normally. The causes are complex and not fully known. Genetics, illness, obesity and getting older may all trigger diabetes.
- ≈ **Triggers Hypoglycemia? Probably not.** Hypoglycemia, or low blood sugar, is actually a condition, not a disease. When blood sugars fall below normal levels, there's not enough glucose immediately available for cells to produce energy. This rarely is a reaction to the ingestion of food.
- ≈ **Makes You Fat? No.** Eating too many calories, not sugars, causes your body to produce extra pounds of body fat.

### Dietary Guidelines 2000

## The **ABC's** of good health

### Aim for fitness

- Aim for a healthy weight.
- Be physically active each day.

### Build a healthy base

- Let the Pyramid guide your food choices.
- Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.
- Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.
- Keep food safe to eat.

### Choose sensibly

- Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat.
- Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.
- Choose and prepare foods with less salt.
- (for adults) If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

## A Healthful Diet Includes Sugar

Sugars, in moderation, are part of a healthful diet. By adding taste, aroma, texture, color and body to all kinds of foods, sugars can make nutritious foods more appealing.

Eating too much sugar, however, can result in unwanted weight gain. Also, sugars provide very few nutrients except energy. Thus the smart choice would be to limit the amount of sugar in your diet, and consume mostly nutrient-dense foods, such as grains, fruits and vegetables, low-fat meats and dairy products.



**Get most of your carbohydrates from starchy foods**, such as pasta, rice, bread, other grains, legumes, potatoes and other starchy vegetables. These are nutrient-dense because they usually supply vitamins, minerals and fiber.



**Fill your sweet tooth with naturally sweet fruit.** Fruit supplies vitamins A or C or both, folic acid, potassium, fiber and other nutrients.



**Read food labels** to find out how much sugar and other nutrients are in a food.



**Try products sweetened with alternate sweeteners:**

- 1) Aspartame (brand names: NutraSweet or Equal)
- 2) Saccharin (brand names: Sweet 'N Low and Sweet 10)
- 3) Acesulfame K (Brand names: Sunette, Sweet One, Swiss Sweet)

## Helping children eat more sensibly when it comes to sugar

### ☺ **Help your kids develop healthy snacking habits:**

The more often you eat carbohydrate foods, especially between meals, the more likely acid will attack your teeth. Plan snack times to be around two hours after the meal. Have your kids eat the snack and then rinse their mouth with water or brush their teeth. Kids should not eat again until the next meal.

### ☺ **Choose snacks wisely.** Eat fresh vegetables, fruits (such as apples), plain yogurt, cheese, milk and popcorn.

### ☺ **Make fruit pops by freezing fruit juice** in ice trays or paper cups with wooden sticks. Not only do your kids taste for sweets, but you are also providing many other nutrients.

### ☺ **Make an attractive parfait** by alternating colorful fruit and yogurt in a clear glass or plastic cup.

### **Note:**

**Alternative sweeteners are not intended for infants and young children.** Children need enough calories for rapid growth. Children who are older than two years and who eat a well-balanced diet occasionally can use foods and beverages sweetened with alternative sweeteners.

## Asian Salad

**Preparation Time: 15 Minutes**  
**Makes: 4 Servings**

- 2 ½ cups cooked chicken, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 (10 oz.) bag shredded cabbage
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 2 carrots, shredded
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro

- 1 cucumber, thinly sliced
- 3 green onions, thinly sliced
- 1 tangerine, sectioned
- ½ cup non-fat Asian or Oriental style salad dressing
- Black pepper

In a large bowl, combine chicken, cabbage, mushrooms, carrot, cilantro, cucumber, and dressing. Toss well. Top with green onions and tangerine sections.

Nutrition Information Per Servings: 220 Calories, 7 g Fat, 70 mg Cholesterol, 367 mg Sodium, 16 g Carbohydrate, 27 g Protein